



Fall color along the trail  
NPS / © MARC MUENCH

## From the Mississippi River Bluffs to the Tennessee Hills

The 450-plus-mile foot trail that became known as the Natchez Trace was the lifeline through the Old Southwest in the nation's early decades. The Natchez Trace Parkway was established as a unit of the National Park System in 1938 to commemorate this historic route. In 1983 the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail was established as a unit of the National Park System and the National Trails System. It runs parallel to the Parkway, providing visitors with another opportunity to enjoy the scenery and history of the Natchez Trace corridor.



### The Road Through the Old Southwest

People have walked the Natchez Trace for thousands of years. Choctaw, Chickasaw, Natchez, and other American Indians traveled long distances through the southern pine and hardwood forests via a network of northeast/southwest trails.

In the late 1800s, the Trace gained a new importance

among the American settlers of the Ohio River Valley. Kaintucks—farmers—transported products to market on wooden flatboats. The men floated down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to the ports of Natchez and New Orleans. There the Kaintucks sold the farm goods and, because they couldn't float back upriver, sold the flatboats for lumber. Then

Today the national scenic trail consists of five separate sections—over 60 miles—developed for hiking and horse-back riding (*see maps on the other side of this brochure*). Portions follow the segments of the original Trace. Like the parkway, the scenic trail is best enjoyed at a leisurely pace. Take your time and you will be rewarded with the sights and sounds experienced by those who came long before you.

### Planning Your Visit

There are visitor information centers at Meriwether Lewis (mp 386), Tupelo (mp 266), Ridgeland (mp 102.4), and Mount Locust (mp 15.5). Each has information about the parkway and national scenic trail sections. The maps on the other side of this brochure give details about the trail sections.

There are campgrounds and picnic areas along the parkway. Back-country camping requires a permit; call 662-680-4014. Nearby towns have food, fuel, lodging, and other services.

Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail is one of over 390 areas in the National Park System. For more information on national parks, visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail  
c/o Natchez Trace Parkway  
2680 Natchez Trace Parkway  
Tupelo, MS 38804  
1-800-305-7417  
[www.nps.gov/natt](http://www.nps.gov/natt)  
[www.nps.gov/natr](http://www.nps.gov/natr)

Emergencies: call 911

### Have a Safe Visit, Help Protect the Park

Trails sometimes cross roads or follow the parkway's shoulder. Use extreme caution in these situations. • Trails may run close to private property. Please respect owners' privacy and posted signs. • Heavy rain can produce muddy and wet trail conditions, even long after the rain has ended. Always remain on the trail and tread lightly to prevent further erosion. • Pets must be on a leash six feet long or less and under physical control at all times. Service animals are welcome. • Motorized vehicles and bicycles are prohibited.

• Stream and reservoir water is unsafe to drink. • Campfires are prohibited. • Carry out all litter. • Be watchful for fire ants, poison ivy, and venomous snakes, and don't put your hands or feet in places you can't see. • If you carry firearms inside the park, you are responsible for understanding and complying with federal, state, and local firearms regulations. Visit the park website for more information. • All natural, historical, and archeological objects are protected by federal law. Do not damage or collect these items.



Red fox  
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Great blue heron with snake  
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Sunken Trace, Potkopinu section  
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Wild turkey  
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Southern magnolia  
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Blackland Prairie section  
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